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ABSTRACT

In an investigation of the effect of teacher role perception on teaching effectiveness, 26 cooperating teachers and their corresponding student teachers rated 48 possible teacher behaviors for degree of desirability. The ratings were used to define role expectations of teachers, which were in turn utilized to explore the degree of accord between student teachers' perceptions of the teacher role and cooperating techers' perceptions of the same role. Six aspects of the role were considered. Results indicate that teaching by student teachers was most effective in a situation where the degree of congruence between cooperating teachers' and student teachers' perception of the role and function of teachers was highest. (LH)

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ROLE CONGRUENCE AS A FACTOR IN ATTRIBUTED SUCCESS OF STUDENT TEACHERS

Part of the continuing debate over the best way to evaluate student teachers is caused by varying ideas about what constitutes good teaching. Both Ryans[1] and Turner[2] found that different observers can see the same behavior differently according to their own values. What is rated as good by one observer at one time may be rated as poor in other circumstances. Furthermore, it has been noted by Flanders that bad teaching is always easier to identify than good teaching.[3]

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One attempt at explaining some of the variables involved in student teaching is the use of role theory as a conceptual framework for the analysis of the school as a social system. Gross, Mason, and McEachern maintained that an individual in a social location behaves with reference to expectations.[4] A person's behavior does not occur at random; it is influenced by the person's expectations and the expectations of others in the given society. Expectations are assigned to any individual who occupies a position regardless of who he happens to be.[5]

Getzels added that the smooth functioning of role relationships is dependent upon the degree of congruence in the perception of expectations among those involved. When the perceptions are congruent, those participating in the relationship feel satisfied with achievement no matter what the achievement is. In the same manner, when the perceptions of expectations are not congruent, the participants will feel dissatisfied.[6]

In many student teaching experiences, the grade is largely determined by the cooperating (supervising) teacher. A cooperating teacher is felt to grade student teachers on how well they meet his own expectations for the position of teacher.[7] Consequently, role congruence should be taken into account in placement and in evaluation

of student teachers. Some recommend that a rematch be made if severe role conflict develops.[8]

This study attempted to determine if student teachers and their cooperating teachers did, in fact, differ in their expectations and if such differences were related to attributed success.

The role definitions used in the study were drawn from the California Teachers Association's Six Areas of Teacher Competence.[9] They are listed below as paraphrased by Wagoner.[10]

Role 1. Director of Learning

> The teacher acting in this capacity plans teaching-learning situations in accordance with acceptable principles of learning and of child growth and development, utilizes effective instructional and evaluative procedures, and maintains an effective balance of freedom and security in the classroom. The emphasis here is on how the teacher teaches.

Role 2. Counselor and Guidance Worker

> The teacher in this role is defined as one who establishes appropriate relationships with the pupil and his family, collects accurately and uses suitably pertinent information about his pupils, and recognizes the need for and the use of specialized counseling and guidance services. The emphasis here is on non-instructional activities of the teacher which are primarily concerned with the student.

Role 3. Mediator of the Culture

> The teacher in this role defines his objectives to

include values important to the culture, utilizes his field of specialization to develop problem-solving effectiveness, develops the appreciations, attitudes, and abilities required for effective participation in a democratic society, and draws from a scholarly background to enrich the cultural growth of his pupils. This role is concerned with the teacher's activities as a communicator of cultural values.

Role 4. Link with the Community

The teacher acting in this role is a person who has the ability to participate with the public in planning goals of education, and in interpreting the school program, who finds opportunities to develop significant applications of subject-matter through educationally valuable pupil services to the community, and who exercises leadership in community affairs with the purpose of making the community a better place in which young people may grow up.

Role 5. Member of the School Staff

The teacher in this role leads the public in studying over-all purposes and objectives of the school and evaluating the success with which all-school objectives are achieved, articulates classroom objectives with those accepted for the school as a whole, plans curricular and co-curricular activities, shares in administrative responsibilities for effective operation of the school program, and participates in the development of school policies.

Role 6. Member of the Profession

The teacher in this capacity is one who demonstrates an appreciation of the social importance of the profession, contributes to the development of professional standards, contributes to the profession through its organizations, takes a personal responsibility for his own professional growth, and acts on a systematic philosophy.

A role Survey Form[11] was filled in by 26 cooperating teachers in a large southwestern city and by their student teachers from a local university. The subjects were asked to rate 48 possible teacher behaviors according to the desirability or undesirability of each behavior. These scores were considered equivalent to the expectations they held for the position of teacher. A score was produced for every subject on six subtests corresponding to the defined roles. Each cooperating teacher was also asked to rate his student teacher's overall success.

The following hypotheses were selected for testing:

Hypothesis 1. There will be no significant differences on the six subtests of the Role Survey Form between cooperating teachers and student teachers.

Hypothesis 2. There will be no significant differences on the six subtests of the Role Survey Form between student teachers rated high and student teachers rated nonhigh. "High" was defined as having a score above the mean on the success measure.

Hypothesis 3.1. There will be no significant correlations on the six subtests of the Role Survey Form between student teachers rated high and their corresponding cooperating teachers.

Hypothesis 3.2. There will be no significant

correlations on the six subtests of the Role Survey Form between student teachers rated nonhigh and their corresponding cooperating teachers.

Hypothesis 3.3. There will be no significant differences on the six subtests of the Role Survey Form between the correlation coefficients of the high rated student teacher/cooperating teacher pairs and those of the nonhigh rated student teacher/cooperating teacher pairs.

The .05 level was chosen to test for all significant differences and correlations.

The study indicated that there were no significant differences in expectations between the cooperating teachers and the student teachers (table 1, following page). Hypothesis 1 could not be rejected.

Hypothesis 2 was rejected only on the subtest for role 5, Member of the Staff. High rated student teachers rated this role significantly higher than did nonhigh rated student teachers (table 2, page 8). Thus, those beginners who do not wish to subordinate themselves to the school's usual procedures may risk being less highly rated than those who accept the situation more readily.

Table 3, page 9, presents the major findings of the study. The expectations of high rated student teachers

TABLE 1

SCORES OF COOPERATING TEACHERS AND STUDENT TEACHERS ON ROLE SURVEY FORMS

Role	Group	Mean	T (df=24)
1. Director of Learning	Cooperating Teachers	49.69	1.08
	Student Teachers	47.77	
2. Counselor and Guidance Worker	Cooperating Teachers	43.08	0.0
	Student Teachers	43.08	
3. Mediator of the Culture	Cooperating Teachers	41.00	0.04
	Student Teachers	44.39	
4. Link with the Community	Cooperating Teachers	40.0	1.60
	Student Teachers	42.85	
5. Member of the Staff	Cooperating Teachers	44.08	0.20
	Student Teachers	44.46	
6. Member of the Profession	Cooperating Teachers	44.15	0.68
	Student Teachers	42.85	

TABLE 2

SCORES OF HIGH AND NONHIGH RATED STUDENT TEACHERS ON ROLE SURVEY FORMS

Role	Group	Mean	T (df=24)
1. Director of Learning	High Student Teachers	48.29	0.39
	Nonhigh Student Teachers	47.29	
2. Counselor and Guidance Worker	High Student Teachers	42.71	0.29
	Nonhigh Student Teachers	43.29	
3. Mediator of the Culture	High Student Teachers	45.00	0.44
	Nonhigh Student Teachers	43.86	
4. Link with the Community	High Student Teachers	44.29	1.09
	Nonhigh Student Teachers	41.57	
5. Member of the Staff	High Student Teachers	47.29	2.04*
	Nonhigh Student Teachers	42.00	
6. Member of the Profession	High Student Teachers	42.14	0.52
	Nonhigh Student Teachers	43.43	

*$p \leq .05$

TABLE 3

CORRELATION COEFFICIENTS OF HIGH AND NONHIGH RATED STUDENT TEACHERS AND THEIR RESPECTIVE COOPERATING TEACHERS ON THE ROLE SURVEY FORM

Role	Group	R	F (df = 1,24)
1. Director of Learning	A[1]	0.95**	137.14***
	B[2]	-0.02	
2. Counselor and Guidance Worker	A	0.20	1.28
	B	-0.05	
3. Mediator of the Culture	A	-0.02	2.40
	B	-0.43*	
4. Link with the Community	A	-0.01	0.23
	B	0.12	
5. Member of the Staff	A	0.19	2.18
	B	-0.23	
6. Member of the Profession	A	0.56**	1.59
	B	0.30	

[1] High rated student teachers and their cooperating teachers

[2] Nonhigh rated student teachers and their cooperating teachers

*p < .05

**p < .01

***p < .001

were more strongly correlated and, hence, more congruent with those of their cooperating teachers on five of the six subtests. In role 1, Director of Learning, and in role 6, Member of the Profession, the coefficients for the high rated group were found to be significant. The nonhigh group had a significant negative correlation on role 3, Mediator of the Culture.

Analysis of the differences between the correlation coefficients indicated that high rated student teachers had significantly more role congruence with their cooperating teachers on the role of Director of Learning. The difference was found to be significant beyond the .001 level.

Role congruence, especially in the role of Director of Learning, appears to be an important factor in student teaching. All subjects in the study rated role 1 as the most desirable role. The chief duty of a teacher is seen as effective classroom instruction. It is the function of the cooperating teacher to critique the quality of the beginner's teaching. If the two parties start with varying ideas about what good teaching is, the relationship will tend to be unsatisfying, and the student teacher will probably receive a lower rating than if role congruence were present.

The other role on which the high rated group had

significant congruence was role 6. Interestingly, this role was rated as the second most desirable by the cooperating teachers.

Student teachers who wish to increase their chances for a high rating should seek out cooperating teachers who hold similar expectations for the position. If this cannot be done, they might plan to act in ways that correspond to the cooperating teacher's views of praiseworthy teacher behavior.

This is not to say that role congruence is necessary for the student teaching experience to be productive. Satisfaction is not the same thing as achievement. In some cases, for example, more benefit could be derived from a forced examination of ill-considered ideas about the educational process. Nevertheless, use of numerical grades supports the widely-held assumption that attributed success is real success.

Colleges of education might want to stress the relationship between expectations and evaluation. Although it may not be possible or even desirable to place student teachers according to role congruence, students should be aware of the standards by which they will be judged. Knowledge of role theory should also benefit students in their professional lives since they will continue to be

subject to evaluation and will be attributed success or failure according to how they meet others' expectations.

END

NOTES

[1]Ryans, David G. Characteristics of Teachers: Their Description, Comparison, and Appraisal. Washington, D. C.: American Council on Education, 1960.

[2]Turner, R. L. "Problem Solving Proficiency among Elementary School Teachers." Bloomington: Indiana University, Institute of Educational Research, 1964.

[3]Flanders, Ned A. Teacher Influence, Pupil Attitudes, and Achievement. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1960.

[4]Gross, Neil, Ward S. Mason, and Alexander A. McEachern. Explorations in Role Analysis: Studies of the School Superintendency Role. New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1958. p. 17.

[5]Ibid., pp. 17-18. This study adopts the definition by those writers of expectation as an evaluative standard applied to the holder of a position, of

role as a set of expectations, and of position as the location of a person or groups of persons in a system of social relationships.

[6]Getzels, Jacob W. "Adults in the School and Community." Readings in the Social Psychology of Education. W. W. Charters, Jr. and N. L. Gage, editors. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1963. pp. 309-318.

[7]The positions "teacher" and "student teacher" are to be considered the same from the viewpoint of the cooperating teacher except that more tolerance for deviation may be shown.

[8]Prokap, Manfred. "Role Conflict in Student Teaching." Research in Education, December 1973.

[9]Commission on Teacher Education, California Teachers Association. Six Areas of Teacher Competence. Burlingame, California: California Teachers Association, 1964. pp. 12-16.

[10]Wagoner, Roderic L. "Perceptions of Teacher Roles in

Arizona Secondary Schools and Their Relation to the Secondary Teacher Education Program at the University of Arizona." Unpublished Doctoral dissertation, University of Arizona, 1965. pp. 135-136.

[11] Ibid., pp. 142-145.